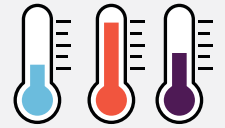


# 2025 BUSINESS CLIMATE REVIEW



The **Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce** conducted its third annual **Business Climate Survey** to gather insights from its 800+ members. The survey aimed to understand the overall perception and experience of doing business in the region, identify business challenges, and uncover opportunities to leverage Springfield's competitive advantages. This report presents a summary of the findings and offers recommendations for addressing the identified challenges and opportunities.



## DATA POOL

Total Responses: 68

Industry Representation: 20 sectors

Highest Responding Industry Sectors:

Nonprofit

18%

Construction/  
Development

16%

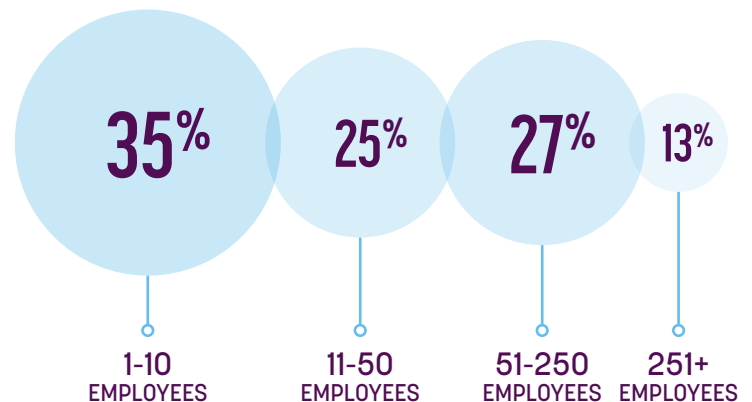
Finance/  
Insurance

13%

Healthcare/  
Social Assistance

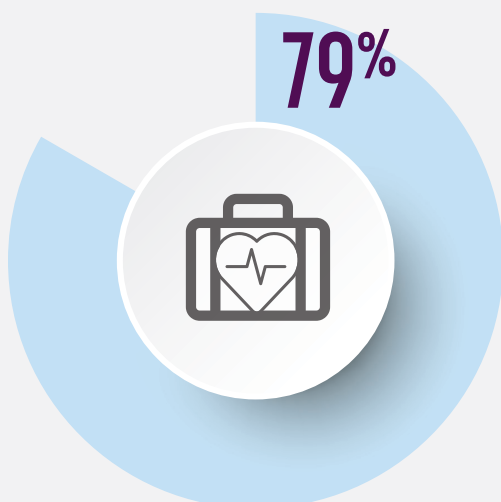
10%

## Business Size Distribution:



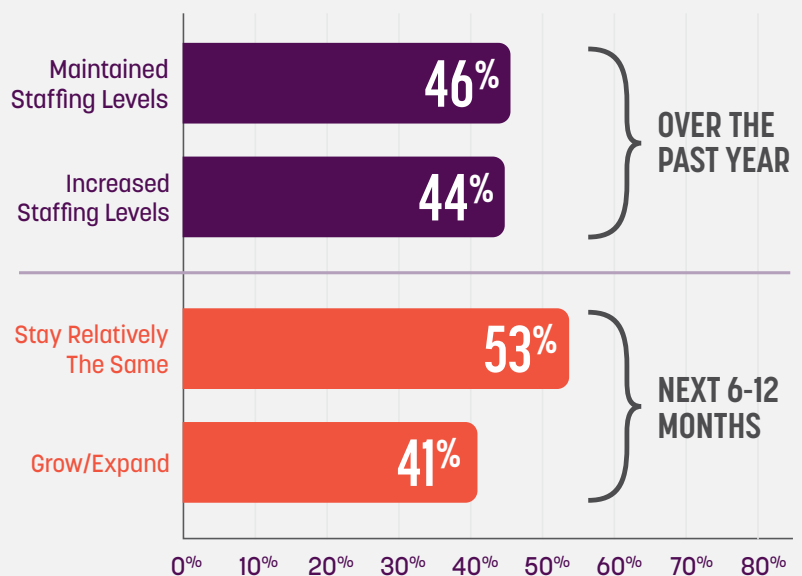
## BUSINESS HEALTH

Respondents that were somewhat or very confident in the current health of their business.



## BUSINESS GROWTH

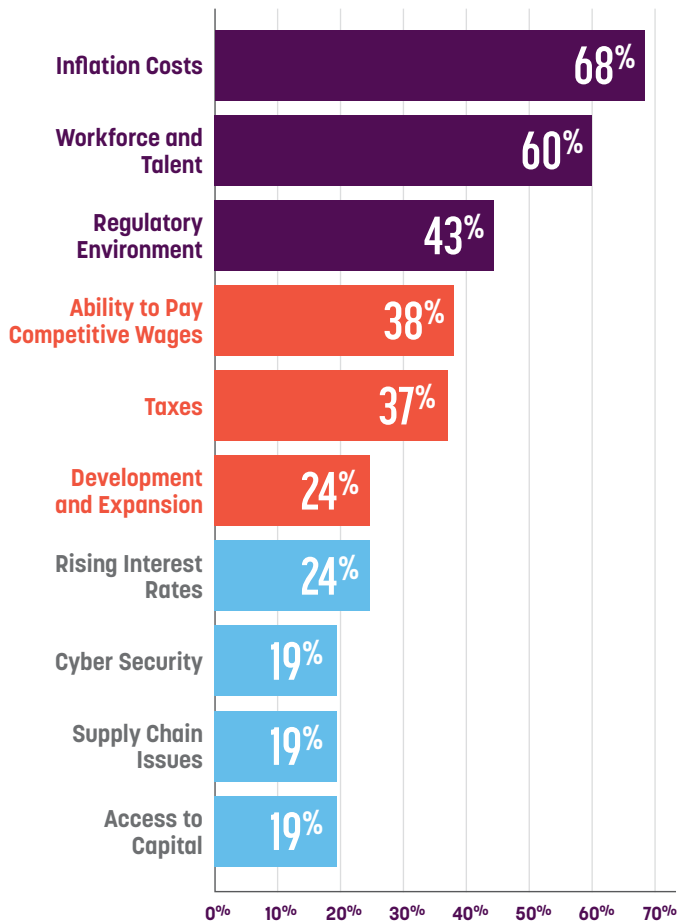
Growth over the past year and expected growth over the next 6-12 months.



From the U.S. Chamber Small Business Index: as of Q1 2025, 63% of small businesses say they are confident in their business health; also of note, 20% say they have increased staff in the past year.

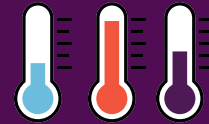
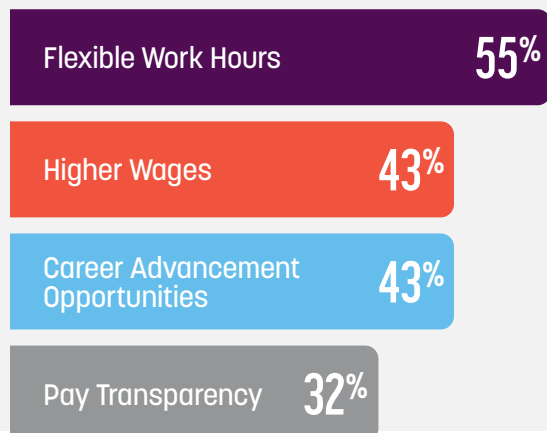
## TOP BUSINESS CHALLENGES

The 2025 survey identified several key challenges impacting businesses.



## TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

Respondents reported the following strategies to attract and retain employees.



## MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Businesses reported various strategies to mitigate these challenges, including:

### WORKPLACE ADAPTATION & UPSKILLING

"... working to create a work environment where staff feel supported and appreciated."

Businesses are responding to workforce challenges by investing in professional development, upskilling, and cultivating supportive workplace cultures that value and empower employees.

### DIVERSIFICATION OF REVENUE STREAMS

"Looking for places to collaborate with other organizations."

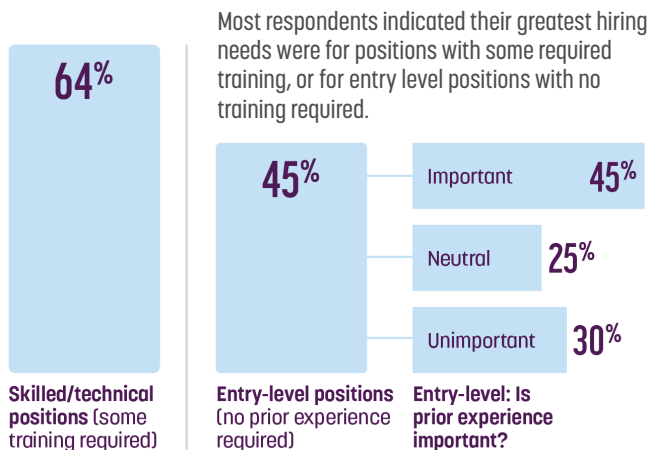
Businesses are pursuing diversification strategies by expanding into new markets, forming strategic partnerships, exploring alternative sectors, and adjusting supply chains as part of a proactive effort to reduce risk and strengthen long-term resilience.

### OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY & COST CONTROL

"Not hiring some positions that have left ..."

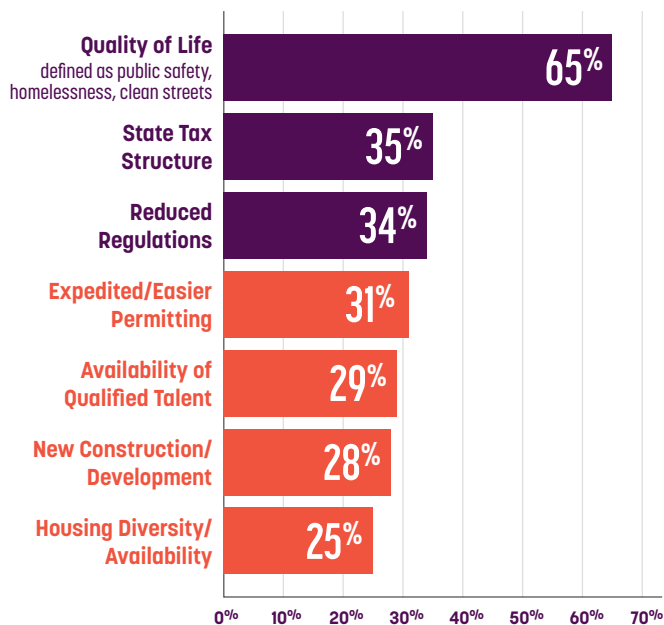
Operational efficiency and cost control: Businesses are emphasizing operational efficiency and cost control by streamlining processes, reducing expenses, and resizing operations in order to maintain financial stability and adapt to ongoing uncertainty.

## WORKFORCE & TALENT: AREAS OF NEED

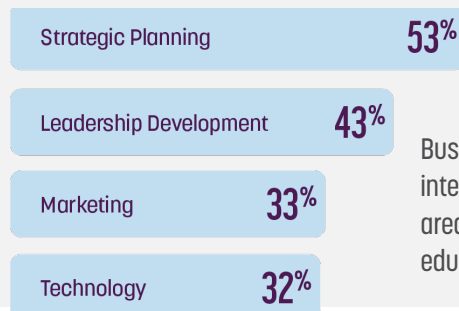


## WHAT WOULD IMPROVE THE LOCAL, REGIONAL, OR STATE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT?

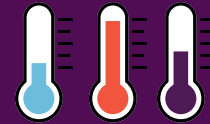
Key areas for improving the business environment were identified as:



## EDUCATIONAL TOPICS OF VALUE TO YOUR BUSINESS

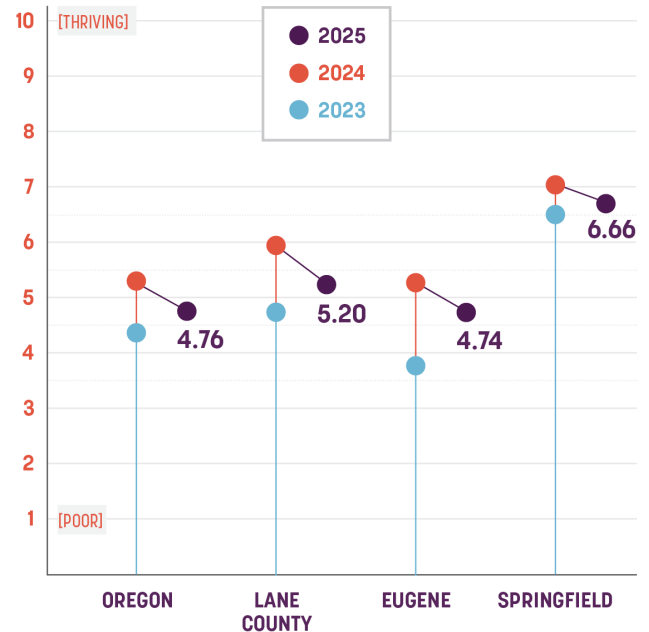


Businesses expressed interest in the following areas for programming and educational topics



## BUSINESS CLIMATE RATINGS

The overall business climate ratings across different regions revealed a slight reduction across the board.



"High taxes, strict regulations, homelessness, drugs, failing education system. These are just some of the reasons that it is hard to thrive and recruit top talent for our businesses in Oregon."

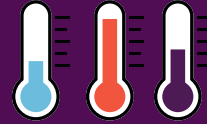
### INDICATORS OF A POOR BUSINESS CLIMATE

Respondents pointed to a lack of appreciation for the business community, limited support for growth and innovation, and structural barriers such as strong union competition, high tax burdens, and insufficient land or infrastructure for business expansion. These perceptions reflect broader concerns about how policy, planning, and public sentiment can hinder economic opportunity.

"Effective governance, favorable fiscal policy, robust infrastructure."

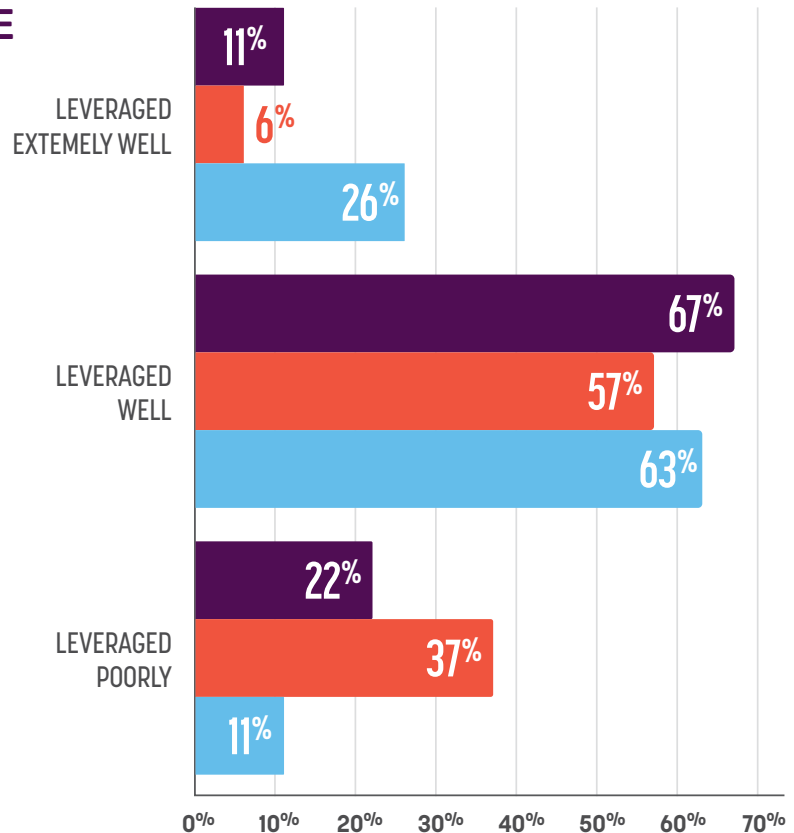
### INDICATORS OF A THRIVING BUSINESS CLIMATE

A strong business climate was associated with quality of place advantages, access to higher education, robust industry sectors, and an active network of business-to-business connections. Respondents also highlighted visible investment in economic development, continued downtown revitalization, and a positive, growth-oriented mindset.



## LEVERAGING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Respondents believe the Springfield area has leveraged its lifestyle/livability, proximity to higher education, and entrepreneurial ecosystem to a certain extent. However, there is still significant room for improvement in maximizing these assets, as very few respondents indicated we'd leveraged these assets extremely well.



## RATE THE ECONOMY

### NATIONAL

Fairly split outlook on the US economy:

**40%** somewhat negative  
**33%** somewhat positive

### LOCAL:

Again, fairly split outlook:

**31%** somewhat negative  
**36%** somewhat positive

## KEY TAKEAWAYS AND INSIGHTS

Now in its third year, the Chamber's **Business Climate Survey** highlights a notable shift in local business concerns. Inflation and rising costs have, for the first time, surpassed workforce challenges as the top issue reported by employers. While business confidence remains high, concerns around taxes, regulations, and cost of living continue to grow. Half of respondents identified strategic planning as a top business need, signaling a heightened awareness of ongoing disruptions and a desire to operate more proactively and sustainably. Businesses have also consistently pointed to quality of life, particularly public safety, homelessness, and clean streets, as a critical factor in improving the business climate. These insights will guide our advocacy efforts and help shape policies that strengthen the conditions for business success across the region.